

<p style="text-align: center;">CM/ECF</p> <p style="text-align: center;">External User's Guide</p> <p>U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Southern District of Florida</p>	<p>Chapter III</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Filing Procedures</p>
	<p>Section 17</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sealed Documents</p>

PROCESS FOR FILING DOCUMENTS UNDER SEAL

Unless otherwise prohibited or restricted by law or a local court rule or order, records relating to proceedings of this court are public and must be made accessible to the public. However, the court, upon request of an interested party, may restrict, limit or prohibit access to court proceedings or court records where a reasonable basis exists for restricting, limiting or prohibiting such public access.

- ◆ Sealed documents must be filed conventionally, in paper, with the clerk in the divisional office where the judge is assigned. Local Form 72 "Cover Sheet to Accompany Items Submitted for Sealing or In Camera Review" must accompany any motion or other paper filed pursuant to Local Rule 5003-1(C)(1). Items I-III must be completed by the party submitting the item(s) to the clerk or to the judge in court.

Note: The cover sheet is not required for motions which request the sealing of a document unless the motion itself is being filed under seal together with the proposed "sealed document ."

- ◆ The sealing of a item or the entire court file will be done only upon court order. An order sealing an item must provide specifics as to who, where and how access will be permitted, whether the request (or motion) to seal an item should also be sealed and the time and manner of disposition of the sealed item(s).
- ◆ Unless otherwise specifically ordered, the sealed item(s) will be unsealed by the clerk upon the administrative closing of the case.
- ◆ If a document is being filed pursuant to a previous court order allowing the document to be filed under seal, a copy of the order must accompany the filing.
- ◆ Sealed documents must be submitted in a sealed envelope.
- ◆ *"In Camera Review"* Under certain circumstances, a judge may inspect a document which counsel wishes to use at trial in chambers before ruling on its admissibility or its use. Filing of these documents must follow the same guidelines as for sealed documents.

If a document is unsealed by order of court, it will be scanned and entered on the electronic docket by the clerk's office.